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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PENCE).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 11, 2004.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MIKE PENCE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) for 5 minutes.

CALLING FOR THE RESIGNATION OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, Vice President CHENEY has told the Nation that people ought to get off Secretary Rumsfeld's case and let him do his job. President Bush has called him "really good" and "superb" in the last week alone.

There are many reasons why Mr. Rumsfeld should resign from his position as Secretary of Defense. It is not just because he engaged in a cover-up in keeping the atrocities at the Abu

Ghraib Prison from the Congress of the United States when he had full knowledge about it, but it is also his incompetency to appreciate and understand the political firestorm that would be set off across the Islamic and Arab world by the humiliation that was taking place, or even the suffering and the humiliation that Americans would feel when they saw these out-of-control soldiers engaging in that conduct.

But it is also because he is reigning over the most incompetent and mismanaged occupation of the country of Iraq, because his arrogance would not allow him to pay attention to those prestigious institutions and people who had actual experience in peacekeeping and restoring democracy to countries, who had done it without taking casualties of American soldiers. They pushed ahead with an inadequate number of resources in terms of soldiers and equipment; they pushed ahead with inadequate resources in terms of paying for this, and for the force protection, his number one responsibility, the force protection of our soldiers.

Because of his actions and because of his rush to war, as the Pentagon Joint Chiefs of Staff study tells us in Lessons Learned, they failed to provide for the protection of these soldiers. More recently, that failure has been translated by the Pentagon to say because of improper equipment for the personal protection of soldiers, because of the improper kind of mix of equipment in terms of non-armored Humvees, one out of four of the casualties was unnecessary, had we been properly prepared with the proper equipment, the training, for our soldiers. One out of four of the casualties was unnecessary, according to the Pentagon, another reason why Secretary Rumsfeld should resign.

HEALTH CARE AND AMERICAN PROSPERITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Janu-

ary 20, 2004, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) is recognized during morning hour debates.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, this week, the House will make history, taking up the first of eight components of the most ambitious and forward-looking economic agenda in a generation. For the next 8 weeks, the House will debate and pass legislation that will begin the process of remaking our economy for the new century.

Rather than treating individual policy initiatives in a vacuum, the American Careers Initiative takes a comprehensive approach, treating health care, energy, education, taxes, regulation and lawsuit abuse reform as parts of a broader economic agenda.

For the next 2 months, the House will focus on one of the eight components of the Careers Initiative each week, starting tomorrow with Health Care Security.

First, we will pass legislation to reform medical malpractice liability laws to protect good doctors, nurses, and hospitals from predatory trial lawyers and their abusive lawsuits, lowering the cost of health care.

Second, we will pass the Small Business Health Fairness Act, which will allow small businesses to enjoy the same economies of scale now used by large corporations, organizations, and labor unions in their health plans.

Third, we will make Flexible Spending Accounts even more flexible, by allowing account owners to hold on to some of their unspent health savings year to year or even roll some of that money into a new health savings account.

We will do all of these things not simply because they are good health care policies, but because they make for greater economic policies.

By reducing the threat of abusive lawsuits, more doctors will continue to see patients and thereby help to reduce the crisis in health care access. By allowing small businesses to reduce the

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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